

How to do a sermon summary for Youth Catechesis II

- (1) Always make sure to have a sermon summary form with you when you enter church. Pencils are in the pews.
- (2) Remember that the 3 chief messages you're listening for are: (a) What does God demand of me? (b) What has God in Christ done for me? (c) How does God give me what He has done for me in Christ? As you hear the pastor say things in one of those categories, jot them down in the appropriate place on the sermon summary form.
- (3) Sometimes the answer to the question, "What does God demand of me?" is said in the negative in a sermon. For example, here's a quotation from a recent sermon (20 March 2016, Palm Sunday):

"Your children have disappointed your hopes beyond what you can bear. And you're angry. Angry at the world. Angry at God. Angry at Jesus."

When you hear something like this, you need to make two steps in your thinking. Step 1: Obviously, it's not a good thing to be angry at the world and at God and at Jesus. So what does the Law demand of me? It demands that I *not* be angry at the world, God, and Jesus. Put positively, the Law demands that I fear, love, and trust in God above all things (and not be angry at Him). So on your paper, where it asks what God demands from you, you might jot down:

- Not to be angry at Him because of my circumstances; in other words, to fear, love, and trust in Him above all things

- (4) Oftentimes, the sermon doesn't have just *one* Law point or just *one* Gospel point. Record each of them as you hear them.
- (5) The answer to the question asking about the Gospel is always just as simple as saying, "Jesus died for the sins of the world." But not every single text that we preach on features that. So the pastor gets at the idea of what Jesus has done for you in different ways. Listen hard to pick those out. For example, a recent sermon (27 March 2016, Easter Sunday) had this:

"That's Christ's first preaching after His resurrection, a beautiful summary of all His preaching: you are His brothers. He has gone before you. Where He has gone through the grave, so will you; where He has been raised to imperishable life, so will you."

You might jot down on your paper:

- "Jesus calls us 'brothers.' Therefore we'll be raised from the dead with Him."

- (6) The question at the bottom of the first page of the sermon summary form is asking you "how does God bring me the forgiveness of sins that Jesus won on the cross?" Sometimes the words Baptism, water, Word, Absolution, Meal, Bread, Wine, Body, Blood are used to express this. Other times, you have to listen a bit more carefully. Remember, you're listening for the pastor to say where you can get what Jesus won on the cross.
- (7) Once the sermon is over, perhaps during the Offering, on the back side of the form, jot down in three to four sentences what you remember of the thrust of the entire sermon. Then go back and make sure the specific points you jotted down earlier fit in with your recollection. If you need to change anything, do so now.
- (8) As a last resort—if the sermon was particularly difficult for you—you can check it online. But it's really best to try to do your sermon summary in church.
- (9) Finally, sermon summaries that answer the question: "What does God demand of me?" by saying, "Keep God's Law;" or that answer the question: "What has God done for me in Christ?" by saying, "Died on the cross," are silly answers not worth your time writing down (or the pastor's time to read). That's basic first-grade Sunday School stuff. I know you know that. I want to know whether you can pick out the Law, the Gospel, and the Means of Grace in a real, live sermon. Remember that catechesis and confirmation is all about unwrapping the gifts the Lord gave you in your Baptism. It's about growing up into a mature Christian. Take advantage of the sermon summaries to do just that.

Catechesis II

Sermon Summary Form

Your name _____

Total Points Earned ___/10

The name of the Sunday of the Church Year _____

Date _____

Pastor's name _____

1. Which Bible passage(s) was the sermon based on? [1/10]
2. Did you hear something in this sermon that God demands of you? If so, summarize it here. This is God's **Law**. [1/10]
3. Based on this sermon, what are some ways in which you fail to meet God's demands? Did the sermon make you think of other ways you fail to meet God's demands? If so, list them. [2/10]
4. Based on this sermon, what has Christ done for you? This is God's **Gospel**. [2/10]
5. Did the pastor say anything about the Word of God, Baptism, Absolution, or the Lord's Supper? He may have used words like "water and Word," "bread and wine," "Body and Blood," "Sacrament of the Altar," "this altar," "forgiveness," or "remission." What did he say about them? [2/10]

[over]

6. What is at least one thing this sermon taught you that you didn't know before or had forgotten, or what is one question that this sermon has raised for you? [2/10]